

BRIEFS

GAINES SETS APPTS. FOR COMM. ON COMMITTEES

DALLAS (BP) — Appointments to the Southern Baptist Convention SBC Committee on Committees were announced April 6 by SBC President Steve Gaines, senior pastor of Bellevue Church in suburban Memphis. The Committee on Committees has two members from each of the 34 states and regions qualified for representation. The Committee on Committees will assemble in Dallas just prior to the SBC's June 12-13 sessions to nominate members of the Committee on Nominations who, in turn, will nominate trustees for the boards of SBC entities for 2019. Mississippi's appointments to the Committee on Committees are Doug Broome, senior pastor of First Church, Natchez; and Gregory Warnock, pastor of First Church, Brookhaven. Gaines named Emir Caner, president of Truett McConnell University in Cleveland, Ga., as chairman.

INDIANA MANDATES CLINIC INSPECTIONS

INDIANAPOLIS (BP) — Indiana now numbers among the 27 states that require annual inspections of abortion centers for health and sanitation violations. Republican Gov. Eric Holcomb signed the legislation last week, drawing approval from pro-life advocates and ire from abortion supporters. The bill also mandates that all medical doctors report treatments they give women for complications due to abortion, including infections and anxiety. "This important pro-life law ensures abortion complications don't get swept under the rug. Hoosier women deserve better," said Indiana Right to Life president Mike Fichter. State Rep. Sue Errington of Muncie, a Democrat who formerly served for 17 years as the public policy director for Planned Parenthood of Indiana, criticized the bill: "It seems to me that this is an attempt to make this appear like a dangerous procedure, and it's not."

Boto to steer Exec. Comm. transition

Retired LifeWay head Draper tapped as EC 'ambassador'

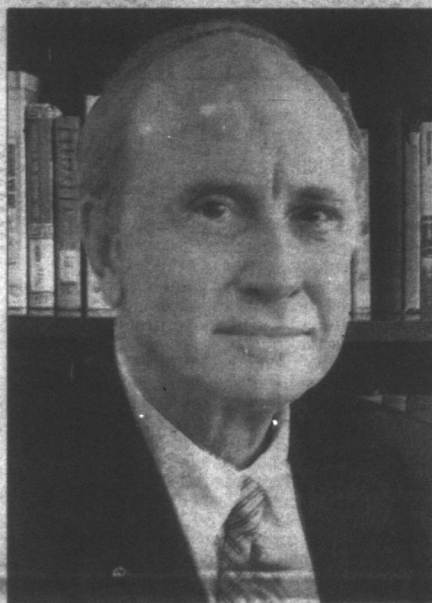
NASHVILLE (BP and local reports) — D. August "Augie" Boto, executive vice president and general counsel of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) Executive Committee in Nashville, was named April 4 to serve as interim president of the Executive Committee after the immediate resignation March 26 of Frank S. Page, former president of the Executive Committee, for what Page termed a "personal failing."

The Executive Committee's five officers, meeting in Nashville, granted Boto "the option to appoint an interim EC presidential ambassador during this period of transition to assist him in fulfilling the many representative functions that fall to the office of president," said chairman Stephen Rummage, senior pastor of Bell Shoals Church in Bandon, Fla., in a statement to Baptist Press.

Boto moved swiftly to name Jimmy Draper, retired former president of LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention in Nashville, as that ambassador.

Draper, who has maintained an active speaking schedule in retirement, is "someone for whom no introduction or explanation need be given," Boto said in an April 9 announcement. "He is someone whom involved Southern Baptists all across our nation would immediately recognize and trust."

Boto brings more than 20 years of denominational service to this strategic task, said Rummage. "Following three years as a member of the Executive Committee in the 1990s, he was se-



BOTO

lected as Executive Committee vice president for convention policy/staff counsel in 1998. In 2007, he was named executive vice president and general counsel of the Executive Committee.

A Texas native, Boto holds a Bachelor of Business Administration undergraduate degree from Baylor University in Waco, Texas, and a Juris Doctor law degree from Baylor.

Boto is a member of Forest Hills Church in Nashville, where he is a Sunday School teacher and regular Bible Study leader. He is married to Cindy, and they have three adult children: Lucas,

see BOTO on p. 7

China bans all online purchases of Bibles

CHINA (BP) — China is purportedly the largest publisher of Bibles in the world, but the communist nation has now apparently blocked online Bible purchases for its residents.

Beginning last week, searches for Bibles at leading online retailers in China came up empty, according to reports from The New York Times and CNN.

The reports indicate certain Bible-based studies or illustrated storybooks were still available through searches, but not Bibles. Two merchants told CNN that Bibles could be purchased through private messages, but public listings are now "impossible."

China has historically restricted in-person Bible sales to state-sponsored channels and government-run churches, but online sales had presented a loophole of sorts for Christians within the growing underground church movement. That loophole has now apparently been closed as part of increased religious freedom restrictions, particularly against Christians.

Non-Christian religious texts, including those belonging to Islam, Taoism, and Buddhism, are still available on the three largest online retailers in China, but none has the Bible available.

Noms sought for 2019 MBC posts

Jackson, MS (Special) — The 2018 Committee on Nominations approved by the messengers of the 182nd Mississippi Baptist Convention in October of last year will soon begin reviewing trustee/board member positions on the boards and commissions of the Mississippi Baptist Convention (MBC) to serve in 2019.

Robby Rikard, committee chairman and pastor of First Church, Wiggins, has said there are a limited number of vacancies to be filled on the following boards and commissions:

- Baptist Children's Village
- Baptist Memorial Health Care System, Inc. (Memphis)
- Board of Ministerial Education
- Education Commission

- Historical Commission
- Blue Mountain College
- Mississippi College
- William Carey University
- Mississippi Baptist Christian Action Commission, Inc.
- Mississippi Baptist Convention Board
- Mississippi Baptist Foundation

The Committee on Nominations will work with the heads of the institutions and agencies to bring a list of nominees to be approved by the messengers of the 183rd annual meeting of the Mississippi Baptist Convention on October 30-31, 2018, at First Church, Jackson.

For nomination forms, telephone Executive Administration (601) 292-3201 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651, ext. 201. A nomination form can



also be downloaded by visiting tinyurl.com/99nom and scrolling to the bottom of the page.

Completed forms should be mailed to the Committee on Nominations, c/o Dr. Jim Futral, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530, at the above address to be received no later than May 1.

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From the editor

WILLIAM PERKINS

January's coming

The realists about widespread legalized gambling (some would call us "anti-gambling") dodged a close one in the 2018 Mississippi Legislature regular session just ended. Interested parties can read more about it in Kenny Digby's Christian Action Commission Concepts report on page five of this issue, but here's the skinny: A quiet (some would call it "underhanded") attempt was once again made to slip through a statewide lottery in the final days of the session.

The critical vote on that lottery measure was 58 against and 56 in favor. That's close. Didn't read about it in the newspapers? That's because it was done so discreetly (again, some would call it "underhanded"). The moral of this lesson is to be prepared for a repeat in January 2019, when legislators will next come to town to try again.

The same types of promises have been made by our politicians and business leaders about the uncountable riches the lottery will bring as when they first sought to ram through legalized gambling under then-Gov. Ray Mabus, a Democrat, and years later in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina permitted the massive expansion of gambling in our state under the promotion of then-Gov. Haley Barbour, a Republican. (See, there are issues on which the two parties can agree).

Remember? Legalized gambling would generate a wide and endless stream of money pouring into government budgets at all levels. Crumbling roads could be freshly paved from here to eternity. Collapsing infrastructure would be miraculously healed. Mississippians would be lifted out of generational poverty. Abundant jobs would cause unemployment to plummet. Crime would all but disappear. Best of all — no school child would ever again want for anything in pursuit of his/her education.

The sky was the limit. Gambling was going to deliver us. Deliver us from what, you ask? Everything that was bad. Everything that was holding us back. Everything we had been denied.

Everything, but most of all it would free us forever from poor public education.

What has been the real story since gambling was legalized? The Washington Post published an investigation three years ago into the plight of Tunica County, where legalized gambling was to be the social and economic salvation of one of the poorest counties in the country.

What did Post reporters find? "Despite all the casino money, a county that ranked in the 1980s among the nation's poorest today [in 2015] had one of Mississippi's highest unemployment rates," wrote Post reporter Chico Harlan.

"A county lashed 30 years ago in a CBS News 60 Minutes segment for its 'apartheid' schools still had a mostly white private academy and a public school system that was 97% black and was given a 'D' grade by the state. A county that the Rev. Jesse Jackson once described as 'America's Ethiopia' had changed little in its poorest neighborhoods, even as riverfront casinos and other lavish development had sprouted up along the farmland hugging the Mississippi River."

In effect, nothing changed. In the interim since Harlan wrote the Post article, the situation has actually gotten worse as evidenced by the emergency takeover of the local public school system by the state.

Legalized gambling has accomplished little long-term good in Mississippi, but it has permanently impoverished many souls and, as evidenced in Tunica County, now begun its long, slow death spiral in the state. Yet we are to believe a statewide lottery will change all that.

We need to ask every politician who wants us to re-elect him/her, "What happened to the money?" It's a simple question. Shouldn't require a lot of thought. It was a lot of money. Where is it? If you don't get a direct, reasonable answer, then you have a decision to make.

Pray about it and vote as the Lord leads at that time, but for right now start getting ready for next January.

New Creations

"You messed up, and this mistake will always be a part of you, from now on."

Have you ever been told that? I'm not talking about making a mistake like spilling your coffee on the white rug, or misspelling a word, or backing your car into a shopping cart. Those are accidents, not moral shortcomings. I'm talking about the kind of mistakes the Bible calls sins.

On the surface, identifying people with their moral failures seems to make sense. Perhaps you committed adultery. Now you are an adulterer. Perhaps you murdered someone. Now you are a murderer. Perhaps you lied. Now you are a liar. Perhaps you cheated on a test. Now you are a cheater.

Using the aforementioned reasoning, who we are is determined by our moral decisions, but there is a problem with this reasoning in light of the Gospel and Christ's sacrificial work on the cross. The way of thinking that our moral failures constitute the entirety of our being, our makeup, our soul, is in total opposition to what the Bible says about our sin. As Christians we rely on the Advocate, Jesus Christ, to cleanse us from all sin (1 John 1:6-2:2) and on the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, to convict us when we make bad choices (John 14:16; Romans 8:8).

Our duty is to turn from that sin in repentance, take up our cross, die daily to ourselves and our sin nature, and follow Jesus (Luke 9:23; Romans 6:4-13).

What happens when we "die" to ourselves? We die to the parts of us that made those bad decisions. We die to the old version of ourselves. We die to those mistakes. Because we are reborn, because those sins are forgiven, those past mistakes are no longer a part of who we are.

Want proof? Take a look at these verses:

■ "As far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us." Psalm 103:12

■ "I — I sweep away your transgressions for my own sake and remember your sins no more." Isaiah 43:25

■ "He will again have compassion on us; he will vanquish our iniquities. You



Guest opinion
with Shea Hicks

will cast all our sins into the depths of the sea." Micah 7:19

■ "... But where sin multiplied, grace multiplied even more." Romans 5:20

Furthermore, there is a massive difference between people knowing what you did and God knowing what you did. People do not have the supernatural power to hurl your sins into the sea. People cannot move your moral failures as far as the east is from the west.

People may remember your sins. People may try to name you by your sins. People may assign your worth based on your past mistakes — but the Bible tells us we are new creations, co-heirs of the Kingdom, chosen and beloved. Nowhere does God say, "Yes, you have received my salvation, and I have put my Spirit in you, but your identity still is adulterer/murderer/liar/cheater." No, we are called sons and daughters of the Most High.

The 1 John 1:9 purification of all unrighteousness that occurs upon repentance is not a partial purification. There is no part of that former unrighteousness left. Believing otherwise is to believe a lie about who you truly are.

We often form thought patterns and perceptions based on the results of choices we make, both good and bad. These thought patterns and perceptions might lead us to believe we should add a suffix to our names as though it is a part of us from now on.

False. You are not John Smith, adulterer. You are not Jane Doe, cheater. You are part of a holy priesthood, and your mistakes are not a part of who you are.

Hicks serves in the U.S. Air Force and is a master of divinity student at Southwestern Seminary in Ft. Worth.

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TALKING RACE RELATIONS — John Perkins (right) of Mississippi, longtime civil rights leader and veteran of the civil rights movement led by Martin Luther King Jr., discusses racial reconciliation during a conversation with Russell Moore, president of the Southern Baptist Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission in Nashville, at the MLK50 conference April 3 in Memphis. (BP photo)

Conference honors MLK Jr. by promoting unity in Christ

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (BP) — Southern Baptists should build on and apply their historic 1995 resolution on racial reconciliation while always being ready to repudiate racism, panelists said April 4 at a Memphis conference commemorating civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr. on the 50th anniversary of his assassination.

The comments came during a breakout session of MLK50: Gospel Reflections. From the Mountaintop, a two-day event attended by about 3,900 people and co-hosted by the Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission (ERLC) in Nashville and The Gospel Coalition.

The conference at the Memphis Convention Center took place in conjunction with many remembrances of King, who was assassinated April 4, 1968, in this Mississippi River city.

In 1995, messengers to the annual Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) annual meeting approved a statement expressing repentance for the convention's past racism and asking African Americans for forgiveness.

The SBC began in 1845 in a split produced by its approval of slavery in the form of support for slaveholding missionaries. Churches in the convention also largely opposed the civil rights movement led by King.

Byron Day, president of the National African American Fellowship (NAAF) of the SBC and senior pastor of Emmanuel Church in Laurel, Md., said the 1995 resolution "was great. It was wonderful, but what are you going to do with it?"

"At every level we need to see the diversity of our convention, and there needs to be accountability," he told the breakout session audience. Regarding accountability, Day stressed the reports from the SBC's entities need to provide more detail on their diversity efforts.

Kevin Smith, executive director of the Baptist Convention of Maryland/Delaware, said, "I would love to continue to press past the 1995 resolution."

The SBC's committees and boards need to reflect the broad diversity of the convention including Hispanics and Asians, said Smith, an African American. The diversity should include positions that make budget and hiring decisions, he added.

Day said one of the messages he hears is, "It's time to stop talking and start doing."

Vance Pitman, senior pastor of Hope Church in Las Vegas, told the audience, "an apology one time does not in any way undo the tragedy of what was done."

"Sometimes white Southern Baptists say, 'Okay, we made our apology. Can we not move past that?'" Pitman observed. "It's a gross misunderstanding of the severity of the issue that took place, and I think for that reason white Southern Baptists should be the kind of Southern Baptists that every time there's an opportunity to drive a nail into the coffin of racism, every white Southern Baptist should be very quick to grab the hammer."

"We should always look for an opportunity to take a stand and to address the issue because it's

something that is part of the history, but by God's grace our past does not have to define our future and for that reason, I think there's great hope."

Racial unity has repercussions for the mission of the church, speakers said.

"If we're Great Commission people, we have to constantly ask ourselves, 'What are the missiological costs of not pursuing Christian unity?'" Smith said.

Pitman said of establishing multi-ethnic churches, "When you begin to penetrate the lostness of your city, what begins to happen is your church begins to reflect your city and community."

"If the average local church does not at a minimum reflect the demographic of the local community around you, you've got to ask yourself a serious question about what is missing in the reconciling power of the Gospel that you are proclaiming."

Pitman said the church he pastors has no majority ethnic group and includes people who speak 54 different languages.

Pastors must recognize the power of preaching in fostering racial unity, Smith said. "Nothing changes in the church in America without the pulpit changing. The historic black church has always known what the pulpit is — transformatively, discipleship-wise, prophetic-wise. The broader church has to own the weight of what the pulpit is, and it's more than the place I want to speak, the place I want to speak to keep my job."

"If that pulpit doesn't speak prophetically for righteousness, it's just not going to be there."

SBC's presidential candidates issue joint call for prayer

NASHVILLE (BP and local reports) — Amid two Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) entity leadership searches and upcoming national SBC elections, both announced SBC presidential candidates have issued a joint call for prayer, grace, and civility.

J.D. Greear, pastor of the Summit Church in Raleigh-Durham, N.C., and Ken Hemphill, former president of Southwestern Seminary in Ft. Worth and currently an administrator at North Greenville University in Tigerville, S.C., made the joint appeal as the International Mission Board (IMB) and the SBC Executive Committee are tasked with finding new entity leaders.

In the midst of the entity searches, Southern Baptists will elect national officers at the SBC 2018 Annual Meeting June 12-13 in Dallas. The winner of the presidential race will replace Steve Gaines, pastor of Bellevue Church in suburban Memphis, who is completing his second consecutive term and is ineligible for reelection.

"After speaking w/my friend @kenhemphill today, we'd like to call all Southern Baptists to act w/civility & integrity toward one another & to join us in praying for the entity transitions ahead & for the upcoming #SBC18 presidential election," Greear tweeted April 5.

"In a phone conversation with friend @jdgrear we agreed to invite Southern Baptists to pray for leaders in transition, search committees, that our respective supporters will speak with grace and civility so we can leave Dallas revived, unified and focused on God's kingdom,"

Hemphill wrote on Twitter April 6.

Gaines retweeted both messages. The original posts drew more than 1,000 likes and were retweeted hundreds of times.

"These are difficult times for us all," Greear told BP April 9, "but we must lock arms and boldly go forward to reach our world with the hope of introducing them to our Savior."

Hemphill also encouraged Southern Baptists to focus on salvations and kingdom building.

"I am concerned that we will get caught up in peripheral issues and miss the critical issues such as baptisms, attendance, unity in diversity, the restoration of key partnerships, and the revitalization of our convention," Hemphill told BP.

In his April 9 email to BP, Hemphill listed the specific prayer requests (paraphrased below) that he and Greear discussed in advance of their tweets:

■ Pray for Frank Page and his family following his resignation from the Executive Committee.

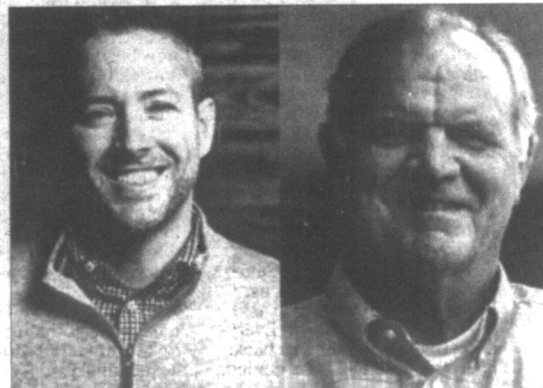
■ Pray for David Platt and his family as they transition from ministry through the IMB to ministry through the local church;

■ Pray for both entity's search committees as they seek God's direction for their respective organizations;

■ Pray for the upcoming SBC presidential election in Dallas;

■ Pray that everyone, whether supporting Greear or Hemphill, speaks with grace and civility, discussing issues in a Christian manner;

■ Pray that Southern Baptists will leave Dallas unified and revived.



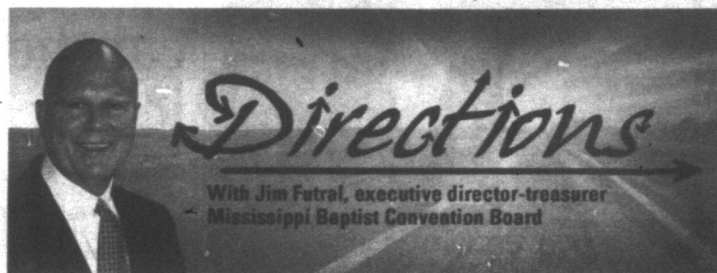
J.D. GREAR (LEFT), KEN HEMPHILL

Just recently, I received an email from a person I know... well, at least his name was in the email. Underneath his name the e-mail stated, "This message has no content." That was right. There was absolutely nothing in the message section or if there was, I didn't receive it. The message about the message was accurate: "This message has no content."

I had gotten things before that had no content but it seems to be (or it did at that moment) that this was really strange: "This message has no content." It stopped me and got me to thinking deeply enough that I wandered off into some times gone by when I preached sermons that probably people could have said — and I may have said — "This message has no content." I've even heard a few sermons from others over my many years about which it might be said, "This message has no content."

For those of us who preach and teach and share the Word of God, we do need to pause and make sure the message we're sending forth is not just a meaningless sound with no content, but is laced with and pack-filled with the Good News from heaven. In fact, it seems to me that if we're going to be Bible preachers, Gospel preachers, Good News preachers, every message must have content. I know there are 66 books in the Bible, and there are thousands and thousands of verses. Our message, though it may cover a lot of different topics, must have in its content at least three things.

First, it must always include the object of our preaching. The object being Jesus. Acts 4:12, "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." The Apostle Paul wrote to the church at Philippi, "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that



'This Message Has No Content'

Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Phil. 2:9-11).

Whatever else you may be talking about, looking at, preaching, and trying to convey to people, first, last, and throughout it must have a word about Jesus. I've been preaching for over 50 years, and over those 50 years I have preached books all through the Bible — series of sermons through Genesis, Ruth, Joshua, Judges, Proverbs, Psalms, Amos, Malachi, John, Philippians, Titus, Revelation, and on and on. In every case I sought to find a message that was flowing from the heart of, and laid before the feet of, Jesus.

In all these years of preaching so many sermons on doctrines, the teachings of the Word of God, I have focused on sin and salvation, the second coming, stewardship, heaven, hell, and on and on the doctrines come and go, but I am challenged again and again to anchor them to the person of Jesus. I have preached about people all through the Bible in biographical sermons, looking at the twelve disciples, Abraham, Moses, David, Balaam, Samson, Mary, Peter, Paul, and in so doing sought to bring them to encircle the person of Jesus who

alone can bring us life and life everlasting. If we're going to have a message that has content, it's going to have the object right and that is to focus on Jesus.

A second thing our message ought to have if it has content, and that is the opposition. I'm not just talking about preaching sermons about Satan, though he is ultimately the opposition to everything that God wants to do. It is Satan himself who will stand between the Good News and the hearts of men receiving Him and making Him Lord. I know there's the world of flesh and the devil that comes against us. I think about Job as Satan goes to God and tells him that nobody really loves Him, nobody cares about God's will in their life, and God says, "Hast thou considered my servant Job" (Job 1:8)? Job, a test that came from Satan. God allowed Satan to do anything he wanted to Job to try to get him to turn his heart away from God. The only thing he couldn't do was kill Job.

The opposition came, and Job remained true and faithful. Every time we teach or preach the Word of God, Satan will come to steal it away from someone's heart and divert that person from

hearing the Word. The Opposer, the opposition, is strong. People need to understand that. God wants to save them, bless them, and lead them, but there is always the opposition. There is always the Opposer. There is the opposition from Satan himself and he will come and try to lead people astray.

A final piece that must be a part of our message if it has true content: it must have an opportunity. An opportunity as presented in the very first message preached by the Apostle Peter. The first Gospel message after the resurrection by any of the disciples is when Peter stands and declares the Good News from Jesus. When Peter did that, you know that their hearts were moved. The Bible says, "Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins" (Acts 2:37-38). There is an opportunity to trust Jesus. It came at that first presentation after Jesus had gone and it continues to this day as He comes into our midst and gives us opportunity to be saved.

The Bible closes with that grand and glorious word in Revelation 22:17, "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." Oh, we have an opportunity to present before the hearts of men, and this very day that opportunity comes to you. This is not a message with no content. This is a message with the content of an opportunity today that you can turn from your sins and you can trust the living Christ and you can be saved today.

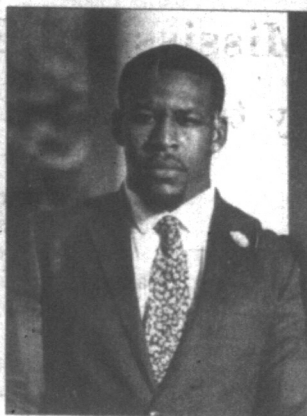
Why not right now? If you've never done that, just bow your head and from the depths of your heart, call on Him and trust Him as your Lord and Savior right now.

The author can be contacted at directions@mbcb.org.

College News



MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE instructor Vicki Miley (center) of Terry was selected in late March as the Southeastern Region Art Educator of the Year by the National Art Education Association in Alexandria, Va. Congratulating Miley are her husband Randy (left), MC art department chair, and Stephanie Busbee, president of the Mississippi Art Education Association and art education professor at MC. Vicki Miley, who retired last year as art educator at Pearl High School in Pearl, holds a master's degree of education in art from MC.



MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE students recently elected Anthony Jackson as the first African American president of the Student Government Association. A Mound Bayou native, Jackson is a junior majoring in political science and a former football player at the university.

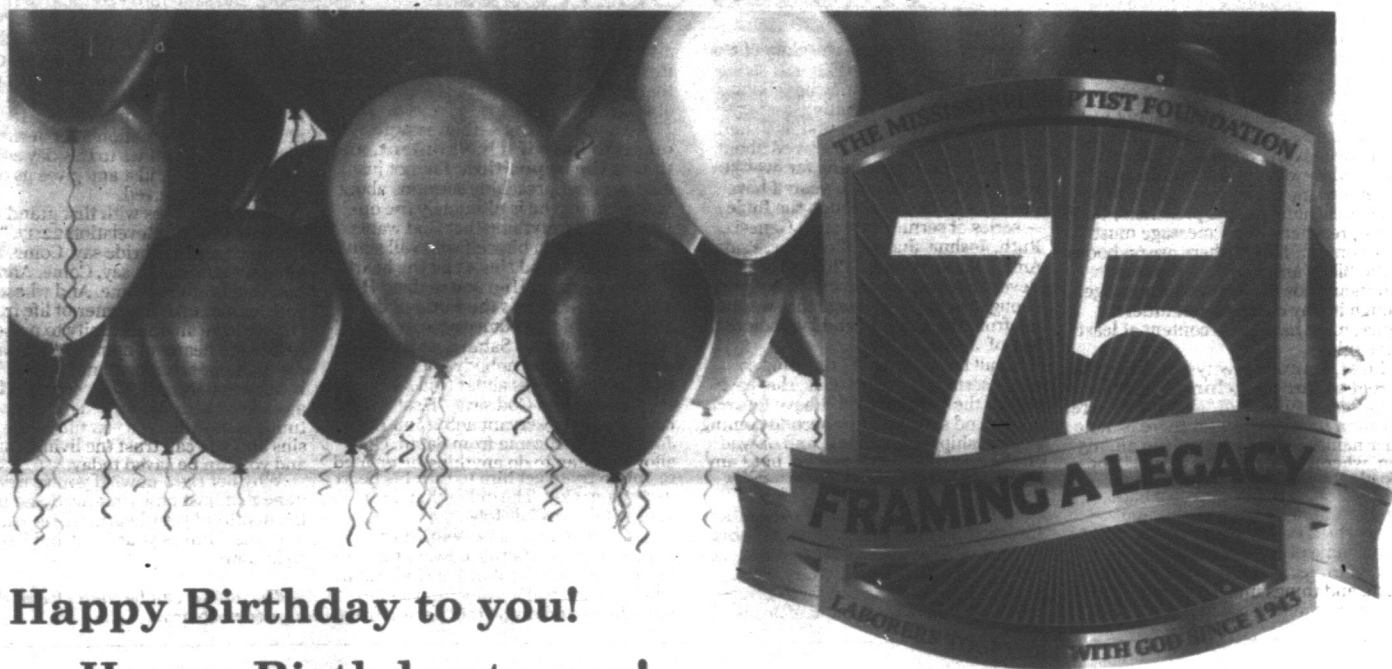


BLUE MOUNTAIN COLLEGE Theta chapter of Pi Gamma Mu international honor society in the social sciences recently installed new members; (back row, from left) Terry Taylor, sponsor; Jacob Mitchell Derrick of New Albany; Monica Lyn Winingham of New Albany; Jeffrey Randolph Wehrman of Nesbit; (front row, front left) Alexa Whitney Kennedy of Pinola; Hannah Grace Harrison of Walnut; Rebekah Grace Rinehart of Woodland; and Sierra Nicole Davis of Waterford.



THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST FOUNDATION

Foundation News • Scholarship Edition • Spring 2018



Happy Birthday to you!

Happy Birthday to you!

Happy Birthday, Mississippi Baptist Foundation!

Happy Birthday to you!



Daniel C. Hall
Executive Director, MBF

That's right! 2018 marks the 75th birthday of your Mississippi Baptist Foundation. During the past seven and one-half decades, the Foundation not only has encouraged Mississippi Baptists to leave a legacy by "Including God's will in their Will," but we have also administered funds, endowments, and trusts on behalf of and for the benefit of our Baptist institutions,

mission boards, agencies, colleges/universities, seminaries, churches, and associations.

Endowed scholarships are among the many and varied types of accounts entrusted to the Foundation's stewardship by generous and visionary individuals and churches throughout our state. Over \$300,000 of financial assistance is awarded annually to more than 300 college and seminary students.

Please receive this edition of *Foundation News* as a snapshot of the Foundation's Scholarship Ministry, as we recognize award recipients for 2017-18 and present updates for this ministry that are taking effect in 2018.

2017-2018 Mississippi Baptist Fou

BLUE MOUNTAIN COLLEGE

Jennifer Baecher	Vardaman
Britton Bass	Jackson, TN
Mollie Beard	Tupelo
Edward Bender	Olive Branch
Michael (Ryan) Blackwell	Mathiston
Casey Cagle	Baldwyn
Rebekah Calvert	Pontotoc
Taylor Carlisle	Strayhorn
Alfie Finley	New Albany
Christopher Fowler	Corinth
Nicholas Fowler	Corinth
Taylor Gilmore	Pearl
Hunter Goodin	Mathiston
Shelby Graves	Ripley
Tryston Hamilton	Iuka
Zaen Harbin	Walnut
Zakary Harbin	Walnut
Jacob Heffner	Marks
Hope Howard	Greenville
Michael Tanner Huffman	Pontotoc
William Tyler Hunt	McCool
Harley Jackson	Belden
Kathryn James	Tupelo
Alex Jones	Ripley
Piper Johnson	Olive Branch
Landon Jones	Saltillo
Sarry-Ann Jones	Corinth
Kara Marie Kelly	Pontotoc
Mikayla King	Southaven
Macy Paige Kirk	New Albany
Hailee Kokos	Olive Branch
Courtney Lentz	Tremont
William Avery Livingston	Houston
Lauren Mallory	Shannon
Blake Martin	Red Banks
Haley Matkins	Myrtle
Logan McBrayer	Baldwyn
Zachary McDonald	New Albany
Bailey Mitchell	Kossuth
Hunter Nobles	New Albany
Anna Palmer	Rienzi
Kelsey Pearce	Saltillo
Eli Puckett	Iuka
Mikayla Rayburn	Ripley
Taryn Rhodes	Belmont
Bethany Rinehart	Woodland
Rebekah Rinehart	Woodland
Gary Roberson III	Bruce
Sarah Roberson	Arkabutla
Richard Mark Robbins	New Albany
Cole Rodgers	Blue Mountain
Lenzi Sanderson	New Albany
Alexandria Sizemore	New Albany
Caleb Smith	Hickory Flat
Emily Standard	Batesville
Kaitlin Stogner	Corinth
Alison Strickland	Corinth
Avery Thorn	Belmont
Faith Walgenbach	Olive Branch
Logan Walker	Booneville
Haley Wallace	Ripley
William Cody Weaver	Walnut
Kristen White	Ripley
Mallory Wooldridge	Collinsville
Mason Wooldridge	Collinsville
Mary Miller Wright	Aberdeen
Ainsley Evan Young	Okolona
Kendall Grace Young	Okolona

MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE

Ali Acord	Meridian
Conner Agent	Gulfport
Kayla Alexander	Monticello
Edward Altamirano	Clinton
Sarah Grace Ashcraft	Clinton
Payton Baker	Brandon
Ryleigh Bardwell	Gulfport
Addison Barton	Flowood
Mary Beth Bates	Soso
Hannah Blanton	Yazoo City
Hannah Boone	Laurel
Leah Bowlin	Mendenhall
William Issac Bowlin	Mendenhall
Brady Bradshaw	Morton
David Brand	Hickory
Matthew Brand	Hickory
Kayla Britt	Wesson
Davoreon (Tiki) Broome	Clinton
Wilson Kice Brown	Madison
Elizabeth (Grace) Bufkin	Vicksburg
Constance Bumgarner	West Point
Hannah Bynum	Mendenhall
Mary Hannah Byrd	Brandon
Carly Beth Cappleman	Starkville
Anna Carter	Brandon
Clint Chapman	Brandon
Breanna Charfauros	Terry
Cooper Chavis	Grenada
Emily Cloys	Philadelphia
Brooklyn Conner	Walls
Hannah Cox	Lorman
Matthew (Austin) Crabtree	Vicksburg
Mason Crowe	Madison
Taylor Cupit	Brookhaven
Dean Damon	Madison
Russell Daniels	Byram
Lauren Davis	Vicksburg
Sarah Davis	Vicksburg
Jaggers Denley	Grenada
Timothy Jack Deyton, Jr.	Madison
Caleb Dickerson	Southaven
Rebekah Dickerson	Southaven
Rebecca Donald	Pearl
Kelsey Dowdy	Clinton
McKenzie Dowdy	Bolton
Emily Duck	Summit
Chancellor Easterling	Pelahatchie
Brandon Evans	Brandon
Grace Anne Ferguson	Southaven
Thomas Fletcher	Independence
Custus "Ellen" Ford	Kosciusko
Jacob Fortenberry	Madison
Bailey-Brooke Foster	Senatobia
Allison Freeman	Natchez
James Robert (Trea) Futral	Madison
Olivia Garrett	Brandon
Jordan Gaughf	Brandon
Abby George	Madison
Cynthia Goodwin	Grenada
Hannah Gray	Brandon
Ashley Green	Brandon
Chandler Greenwood	Madison
Daniel Hall	Jackson

Laci Jane Hamilton	Wesson
William Hamilton	Brandon
Noah Hancock	Baldwyn
Katy Lyn Hare	Booneville
Lydia Harrington	Biloxi
Erin Harrison	Florence
Annie Hawks	Madison
Cody Hawks	Madison
Matthew Hendry	Laurel
Abbygail Hicks	Southaven
Scarlett Hodges	Madison
Jacob Holden	Hurley
Carney Holloway	Madison
Camille Hood	Pearl
Kaitlyn Horton	Gulfport
Brandon Huddleston	Little Rock
Abigail Hunter	Southaven
Issac Jackson	Starkville
Noah Jasper	Brandon
Berry Johnson	Oxford
Caroline Jones	Laurel
Kaela Jones	Raymond
Taylor Jones	Richland
Kimberlee Keltner	Southaven
Ivy Killen	Hattiesburg
Austin King	Water Valley
Christopher A. King	Waynesboro
Julie Kramer	Caseyville
John M. Ladner	Gulfport
Brynn Latham	Stewart
Kristen Layton	Petal
Rebecca Lee	Clinton
Bradley Lewis	Kin
Sarah Lewis	Clinton
DeAnna Lyons	Magee
Abigail Macoy	Richland
Lauren Mahan	Madison
Joy Marble	Wade
Rebecca Martin	Florence
Tatiana Mask	Picayune
Allison Massey	Morton
Abagael Mathis	Brandon
Callie May	Madison
Kayla McCrory	Kosciusko
Ruby McCullough	Brookhaven
Valerie McGregor	Hernando
Aaron McKenzie	Columbia
Mollie McLellan	Kosciusko
Dylan Miller	Meridian
Elizabeth Miller	Brandon
Madelynne Mohr	Sumrall
Chandler Moore	Brookhaven
Haley Moore	Summit
Hannah Moore	Brookhaven
Katie Morehead	Southaven
Anna Nagle	Yazoo City
Emilee Norwood	Ellisville
Dalton Outz	Macon
Hannah Overstreet	Hattiesburg
Christopher Parella	Grenada
Jonathan Parks	Clinton
Tiffany Pait	Ocean Springs
Lauren Payne	Madison
Kyla Perry	French Camp
George Peterman	Gulfport
Jillian Peterman	Gulfport
Parker Peterman	Gulfport
Ali Pike	Philadelphia
Aaron Plunkett	Monticello

Foundation Scholarship Recipients

James (Alex) Pope	Flowood
Eric Prather	Clinton
London Prather	Madison
Paul Pratt	Clinton
Maxwell "Cole" II Price	Charleston
Kobe Quichocho	Richland
Carley Quillin	Kosciusko
Aaron Ragsdale	Mize
Rachel Reed	Oxford
Dillon Robinson	Greenville
Makayla Robinson	Greenville
Brian Rogers	Columbia
Manuela Rosipko	Ocean Springs
Natalie Russell	Natchez
Peyton Sampson	Carriere
Allie Sandifer	Clinton
Emma Scott	Clinton
Hannah Shafer	Olive Branch
Jamie Shelby	Meridian
Kayla Shelby	Taylorville
Justin Sherman	Van Cleave
Meagan Sherrer	Picayune
Brenton Shows	Van Cleave
Molly Sorto	Pontotoc
Adriann Southern	Hattiesburg
Jacob Speckner	Bentonla
Katelyn Stanford	Water Valley
John Thomas Stanford	Water Valley
Julianne Stephens	Meridian
Lindsey Strahan	Poplarville
Drew Sumrall	Van Cleave
Austin Swindall	Laurel
Charles Switzer	Clinton
Micah Thomas	Madison
Sarah Thomas (Foxworth)	Madison
Sydney Thomas	Clinton
Jackson Thompson	Vicksburg
Sarah Trimble	Southaven
Hanna Tucker	Raymond
Laurie Upchurch	Madison
Hayden Van Norman	Sandhill
Jared Yardman	Morton
Mallory Walker	Brandon
Ryan Warnick	Tupelo
Lauren Warwick	Jackson
Chris Williams	Madison
Madison Young	Tupelo
Ava Joelle Youngblood	Meridian

WILLIAM CAREY UNIVERSITY

Raechel Abney	Diamondhead
Alexandra Anthony	Madison
Emily Branan	Hattiesburg
Katelyn Renee Brown	McComb
Seth Brownlee	Moselle
Victoria Chance	Monticello
Brian Cloys	Philadelphia
Anne Daley	Prentiss
Emily Ennis	Tylertown
Kimberly Gilbert	Saucier
Mikayla Giles	Meridian
Jamie Lindsey Holland	Gulfport
Lydia Howard	Poplarville
Anna McDaniel	Toomsduba
Matt McNaair	Pearl
Katelyn Nichols	Sumrall

Peyton Quinto	Picayune
Angel Rimes	McComb
Kayla Robinson	Columbia
Matthew Romack	McComb
Logan Sears	Hattiesburg
Shelby Keith Sheffield	Picayune
David Sizemore	New Albany
Melanie Soldinie	Petal
Katelee Thomas	McComb
Jimmy K. Tisdale, III	Ellisville
Ashley Walters	Laurel
Michaela Ware	Van Cleave
Lauren Wells	Summit
Micah Williams	Hickory

GATEWAY SEMINARY

Lee Davis	New Albany
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NEW ORLEANS BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Glory Albonetti	Eudora
Whitney (Loren) Aldridge	Meadville
Virginia Alexander	Hazlehurst
Michael (Cole) Andrews	Starkville
Timothy Aycock	Morton
Wesley Barker	Grenada
Kathryn (Allison) Beland	Gulfport
Zachary Bennett	Dumas
Abbie Blakeney	Caledonia
Amelia Brashier	Clinton
Tyler Brown	Caledonia
Paul Burnham	Laurel
Joshua Cline	Grenada
Marcus Scott Cooksey	Collinsville
Rebecca Cooper	Florence
Justin Craft	Magee
LeeAnn Culbertson	Ellisville
Caleb Cummings	Grenada
Kyle Davis	Pocahontas
Christy Dawson (Bain)	Clinton
Shandy Dill	Iuka
Logan Eltzey	Madison
Jared Ennis	Tylertown
Jonathan Espy	Picayune
Bradlee Fletcher	Madison
Stevie Franks	Philadelphia
Michael Green	Horn Lake
Rebekah Guthrie	Hurley
Stephen Guthrie	Hattiesburg
James David Hall	Tupelo
Conner Hinton	Columbus
Henry (Owen) Hitchcock, Jr.	Pontotoc
Charles Norman Hocker	Florence
Brandy Johnson	Florence
Matthew Kelly	Brandon
Thomas Lister	Madison
Hunter Lynch	Vicksburg
Laura McCain	Amory
Jedd Mosk	Moss Point
Daniel Moody	Madison
Christopher Brandon Phillips	Coldwater
Joseph Ford Rigney	Madison
Brandy Rouseville	Jackson
Caleb Sayger	Hernando
Jeremy Shoemaker	Brandon

Matthew Spencer	Brandon
Joseph Seth Stanley	Braxton
Christopher Terry	Guntown
Blake Vance	Starkville
DeAron Washington	Lexington
Jason Webb	Baldwyn
Matthew Welford	Lucedale
Kimberly Westmoreland	New Hebron
Kayleigh White	New Albany
Samuel Ward White	Starkville
Kimberly Williams	Madison
Megan (Cole) Windham	Clinton
Garrett Windham	Terry

SOUTHEASTERN BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Jamie Chiles	Clinton
Rebecca Hankins	Oxford
Matt Herrington	Magee
Allen Paul Howayack	Tupelo
Kathryn James	Madison
Ryan James	Leesville, LA
Julie Johnson	Columbia
Tanner Marquis	Oxford
Kristen Montgomery	West Point
Andrew Sheely	Meridian
Nathaniel Sisson	Biloxi
Drew Williams	Madison
Melody Williams	Madison
Christopher Willson	Brandon
Meagan Anne Willson	Brandon

SOUTHERN BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Candice Holland	Indianola
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SOUTHWESTERN BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Steven Alford	Vicksburg
Jonathan Blair	Meridian
Brady Fortenberry	Oxford
Jessica Gain	Vicksburg
Kevin Gray	Belden
Charles Huckaby	Oxford
John Mark Jarrett	Tupelo
Richard W. McKay	Philadelphia
John Caleb Monaghan	Amory
Ann Merritt Moore	Brandon
Nathan Morris	Madison
Matthew Munlin	Houston
Andrew Payne	Golden
Steven Platt	Columbus
Jonathan Poe	Collinsville
Gary Roberson, Jr.	Blue Mountain
Nathan Strong	Laurel
Anthony Vargas	Meridian
Brandon Ward	Marion
Donald Jay White	Oxford

"As my husband is also furthering his education to grow his pastoral ministry and we are in the process of adopting our first child, we are so humbled and thankful for the assistance that has been granted to us. It is our desire to take faithful steps of obedience to what God has planned for us, and it is a joy to have you as a part of His provision for us. We are so thankful to serve a God who equips the called and we are thankful for your faithfulness and generosity which further equips us for our calling. You are a wonderful blessing in our lives.

Until All Hear,

Virginia Alexander"

Recipient: Merwin & Aline Bennett Scholarship
Study: Masters Degree in Christian Education
New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary

"During the March of 2015, God used the passage of Abraham and Isaac in Genesis 22 to confirm the call on my life to ministry.

I put my yes on the table and gave Him my life, so He could use me to do great things. Now, He is using you to bless me financially, so I can obtain a degree. I could not be more thankful for you and your generosity. Thank you so much for believing in students enough to fund them in their studies.

May God bless you ten fold."

Edward Bender, Jr.

Recipient: John and Betty Dowdle

Scholarship

Study: Business Administration major,
Spanish minor
Blue Mountain College

"I am very grateful for your assistance in helping fund my tuition so I may go to school to be equipped by God's people to share God's word. May God bless you all and continue to use you all to send more people to sit under instructors of God's word.

For His Glory,

Anthony Vargas"

Recipient: Thomas E. Williams
Scholarship

Study: Masters of Divinity,
concentration in Evangelism
and Missions

Southwestern Baptist
Theological Seminary

"My primary reason for choosing to attend William Carey is because I want to pursue a degree that will prepare me for the mission field ... I thank you sincerely for your scholarship gift to me, I pray that I will measure up to be all that God wants me to be. Without Him I would fall short of everything every time."

Mikayla Giles

Recipient: Mary Kyle Scholarship

Study: Elementary Education and
Intercultural Studies
William Carey University

"I seek to continue to further the Kingdom of Christ through my education and extracurricular activities, as well as into the rest of my life, and this scholarship has given me the opportunity to do just that."

Drew Sumrall

Recipient: Bardie F. Breazeale & Mildred Crawford Scholarship

Study: Biological Sciences, Pre-dental concentration
Mississippi College

In Conclusion...

I hope that these quotes and comments offer a glimpse of the manner in which MBF scholarships have served as a channel of blessing for past award recipients. Your friends at the Foundation also hope that these expressions of appreciation have inspired you to consider providing for future students through a scholarship endowment. —Daniel C. Hall

Please note: Our policy, for the Mississippi Baptist Foundation Scholarship Ministry, has changed. Changes are in effect beginning with the 2018-19 academic year. While highlights are included below, applicants and family members are encouraged to review the full policy on our website.

- » Application deadline is April 30
- » Awards to college/university students now focus on juniors and seniors
- » FAFSA no longer required for college/university students
- » Full-time students will continue to receive priority
- » Applicant must still be a member of a Mississippi Baptist church cooperating with the Mississippi Baptist Convention
- » Read the updated policy by entering msbaptistfoundation.org/ScholarshipPolicy in your web browser, or scan the QR code (at right) with your smartphone or tablet for quick access



Christian Action

COMMISSION

CONCEPTS

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CHRISTIAN ACTION COMMISSION

WITH LINDA GIBBY



The Legislature surprised many of us with an early Easter present. They declared SINE DIE on Wednesday morning, March 28. They went home early with no need for any special called session.

This was my second regular session serving all of you as Executive Director of the Christian Action Commission of our Mississippi Baptist Convention. Each of the four annual sessions, after the statewide election, have a unique flavor. The first session is 120 days instead of 90. This extra time gives the veterans and rookies opportunity to get organized and to settle in.

The next three annual sessions have 90 days. The second session (my first, last year)

is the session where something new (such as the lottery) is the greatest threat. The legislators are settled in and have three years before facing re-election. If a senator or representative is going to take a risk, this second session is the time. In my first year, I jumped out of the fat into the fire.

Sitting in the south gallery of the House, listening to the Governor's State of the State address last year, I knew the lottery would be the greatest threat it had ever been. We survived the regular session

Whew!

without a lottery. But, there had to be a Special Session (in my very first year) to fund MDOT and other departments. We survived the Special Session without a lottery.

Then came the Study Committee out of the House to look at the pros and cons of lotteries in other states. We at the CAC were available to speak at the public hearing against the lottery, but were refused the two minutes we needed to "set the record straight." I still hear comments (one last week) about

how surprised some were that we did not voice our opposition at that hearing — we were not given the privilege to voice our opposition. We did put a letter into the study report explaining why we were AGAINST the lottery.

Nearly everyone thought a lottery was a done deal in this year's session (my second regular session and the third after the election). Praise the Lord, many were surprised that we have no lottery. Thanks to your contacting the good men and women in our

legislature, I have survived my freshman and sophomore years without a lottery. God is good, all the time.

But we must stay alert and vigilant. January will be here before we know it. A last-ditch effort in the House during the final week to start a lottery failed by a slim margin, 58 to 56. Please check how your representative voted. Know the truth and the truth will set you free (John 8:32).

WHEW!!!

Digby is executive director-treasurer of the Christian Action Commission. He can be reached at (601) 292-3329/office, (662) 284-9163/cell, or by e-mail at kdigby@christianaction.com.



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NEW HNAT PE AZBG, NK QVCPKO NAKZ

VNOV AZBGW DK, NEW VNOV SPBGE

VPYKGAX XZC DK NE ZXXGCPES NEW

N KNQCPXPQG OZ SZW XZC N

KHGGOKYGAAPES KNBZDC.

GLVGKPNK XPBG: OHZ

Clue: Q = C

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Mark 11:25

By Charles Hales 1932-2008

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Revival & Homecomings

► Arlington Church, Beaumont: 100th anniversary, April 22. Worship service, 10 a.m.; fellowship to follow. Afternoon Praise in song.

MS POSITIONS

SPRINGDALE BAPTIST IN RIPLEY IS ACCEPTING RESUMES FOR THE POSITION OF ASSOCIATE PASTOR/YOUTH MINISTER. Applicants should E-mail resumes to slmckee2003@yahoo.com.

CRENSHAW BAPTIST CHURCH IS IN NEED OF A PART TIME SONG LEADER. Please call Nathan Perry at 901-606-4086

NEW HOPE BAPTIST CHURCH, MONTICELLO, MS SEEKING BIVOCATIONAL MUSIC MINISTER. Send Resumes To: 618 Carmel-New Hope Rd, Monticello, MS 39654 Ph. 601-587-2862

INDIAN SPRINGS BAPTIST CHURCH IN LAUREL, MS IS SEEKING A FULL TIME MINISTER OF STUDENTS/ACTIVITIES AND A PART TIME BIVOCATIONAL MINISTER OF MUSIC. Send resumes to the Personnel Committee, Indian Springs Baptist Church, 500 Indian Springs Church Road, Laurel, MS 39443.

MIDWAY BAPTIST CHURCH - LUCEDALE, MS IS SEEKING A BIVOCATIONAL PASTOR. Send resume to: Midway Baptist Church, Attn: Pastor Search Committee 2206 Howell Tanner Chapel Rd, Lucedale, MS 39452. Or via Email: clyde@imcylde.com

THE VILLAGE VIEW



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GIFTS OF HONOR AND MEMORY

A portion of The Village View is allocated each month to a list of Gifts of Honor and Memory. Many groups and individuals elect to pay tribute to others through this sensitive, meaningful, and helpful medium. This feature is hopefully designed to further honor, with taste and respect, those who are and have been special to our special friends.

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Mrs. Alice Grisham
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Mr. & Mrs. L. J. Garner
Shannon & Monica Jones
Mr. & Mrs. Mickey Hale
Michael Wack
Ms. Mary W. Wack

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Mrs. Annie Churchwell
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Ms. Carolyn Johnson
Dr. & Mrs. James H. May

Mr. Philip "Phil" Kelly
MS Section Phone Net
Mr. & Mrs. Jerry W. Cuevas
Mrs. Sue Kelly
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Alexander
Mr. & Mrs. Jimmy Jenkins
Mrs. Linda Kirby
Mr. & Mrs. Mike Dean
Mrs. Ben Koostra
FBC Macon
Mr. Randolph Laird
Mrs. Shirley Zumbro
Mrs. Rita Land
Tineley BC
Lucille Williams
Kim Lindsay
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Alexander
Mrs. Susan Littrell
Mr. Michael L. Filgo
Mrs. Leigh Anne Marquis
Mr. & Mrs. Mike Dean

Mr. Lee Martin
Mr. & Mrs. Clifton Porter
Ms. Virginia Massey
Mr. & Mrs. Joe D. Crowson
Mrs. Maxine McCaa
Mr. & Mrs. Arthur E. Bishop
Mr. George McKee
Mr. & Mrs. Bill Greer
Mrs. Imogene Medders
Mr. & Mrs. James K. Williamson
Mr. Bartie Gavin Miller
The B. Coley Daughdrill Family
Jeff Miller
Mr. & Mrs. Marvin E. Miller
Ms. Gail W. Phipps
Mrs. Margaret Ming
Mr. & Mrs. Jim Brannon
Annie Pearl Monk
Mr. & Mrs. Jerry Sisco
Mr. Henry Mosco
Mr. & Mrs. Mike Dean



FBC TAYLORSVILLE WMU hosted a guest speaker from The BCV at their monthly luncheon, March 20, 2018.

BCV EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

The BCV employs Christian, mission-minded, husband and wife teams, without dependent children or pets, to serve in the position of Houseparents. The couples must be mature Christian adults with personal integrity, character and of good reputation with standards and ethics expected of any member of The Baptist Children's Village staff.

They receive a salary with benefits and are provided a private bedroom and meals while on duty. The primary job responsibility of Houseparents is to maintain a home-like environment that models healthy, Christian family living for children and youth residents. They are the primary caregivers and help with everything from transportation and homework to laundry and meals when on duty.

Houseparent responsibilities are varied and somewhat dependent upon which campus and to which cottage the couple is assigned. However, all Houseparents need to be in good physical, mental and emotional health. They must be cooperative and comfortable working in a team environment.

To apply for the current Houseparent openings, please contact Celeste Cade at ccade@baptistchildrensvillage.com or 601-922-2242.

A complete job description and application may be downloaded at www.baptistchildrensvillage.com.

Serving God's People • 1 Corinthians 12:4-12, 21-26

Jack and Jill fell for each other in a big way, and soon married. Wanting to show Jack how precious he was to her, Jill decided to create a gift specifically for her beloved, something that would bring him tremendous joy and blessing. With much anticipation, Jill presented her husband with the beautifully-wrapped gift. Jack smiled, thanked his wife, gave her a hug, and set the unopened gift on top of their china hutch. Crestfallen, Jill said nothing, but was saddened by Jack's indifference. Months passed, and the gift remained atop the hutch, collecting dust.

Many Christians are like Jack. The supreme Lover of their soul has given them one or more unique, personal and precious gifts, but they are never "opened" and put to use. How that must grieve the Giver! In today's lesson, Paul delves into the subject of such spiritual gifts. In 1 Corinthians 12:1, he begins his discussion by telling this group of believers he didn't want them "to be ignorant" (NKJV) about these gifts (other Bible translations offer the word "uninformed" or "unaware"). This was too important an issue for Paul to not address!

The gifts are diverse

In verse 4, Paul declares, "There are diversities of gifts." I recently saw this fleshed out when our church served a funeral meal to one of our families. Since thoughts for

this lesson were percolating in my brain, I was acutely attuned to the giftedness around me. God works through His children through "gifts," "ministries" and "activities" (vss. 4-6).

The gifts are specific

Verse 7 contains the two little words, "each one." The Holy Spirit manifests Himself in every believer's life by giving at least one spiritual gift, "for the profit of all." The gifts aren't for self-gratification; they're for serving others. In verses 7-10, Paul enumerates several of the gifts he had seen exhibited in the early church. Other New Testament Scriptures present different lists; see Romans 12:6-8, 1 Corinthians 12:28-30, Ephesians 4:11, and 1 Peter 4:9-11. We'd be amiss to think these lists are all-inclusive. Certainly, the Lord is not limited in His ability, design and empowerment to provide whatever gifts (and gifted servants) are needed by a particular congregation.

Back to my example of the funeral meal: While it was being prepared, I talked to a

staff member who plans to serve with one of our Mississippi missionaries this summer. Finances are always a concern; but I smiled, knowing we have members who regularly exercise their gift of giving for such needs. As helpers bustled about the kitchen, our church hostess deftly coordinated the process, displaying her gift of administration. A spilled beverage container quickly summoned willing hands with a mop; the gift of service portrayed. Our pastor came in after delivering a message of hope and encouragement, thereby employing his prophetic gifting. Another helper freely dispensed hugs and caring words to family members as they arrived; mercy revealed at its finest. Obviously, all Christians are called to merciful, giving, helpful and wise, but in certain individuals, these gifts are abundantly displayed when empowered and energized by God's Spirit.

The gifts are intentional

Verse 11 shows the Holy Spirit distributes these special abilities and enablements

"to each one individually as He wills." Employing a word-picture in verses 12-25, Paul compares the diversity and yet cohesion of a spiritually-gifted congregation to that of the human body. In our individual church families, we see this body analogy depicted: there's the eye to study God's word in preparation to teach, the mouth to speak words of encouragement and exhortation, the hands eager to serve others, the feet carrying the good news near and far, the knees kneeling in faith-filled intercession.

And we all need each other; we are each a necessary part of our local body (see verse 21). In his book, "Purpose Driven Life," Rick Warren says, "no one else on earth will ever be able to play the role God planned for you. If you don't make your unique contribution to the Body of Christ, it won't be made." He advises those who aren't sure where they fit in, to "start serving, experimenting with different ministries, and then you'll discover your gifts." We should also affirm the giftedness we see in others: "Let us think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and good works," Hebrews 10:24 (NLT) tells us.

Our church family is weakened or strengthened according to the measure its members identify, develop, and share their individual gifts. It's that important.

Maniscalco is a member of Emmanuel Baptist Church in Ocean Springs.

**Explore the Bible**

with Ann Maniscalco

Our Righteousness • Jeremiah 33:3 - 8, 14 - 15

Life is just not fair. People with poor character, questionable ethics, and skewed morals seem to get ahead in life, while those who seek to do right seem to be passed by. In fact, people are often treated badly because of their right actions and character. We might be tempted to think God is also unfair since He allows this to happen. But God is a righteous God. He is the Lord our Righteousness, and He will ultimately bring justice to bear on all things.

Jeremiah 33:3 - 5. God will display His wrath against evil.

It's been said that J-E-R-3-3-3 is God's phone number: "Call to me and I will answer you and tell you great and incomprehensible things you do not know" (CSB). This is a classic verse often heard in personal testimonies, but to appreciate it we have to find some context. Jeremiah wrote this while he was in prison. Look back at chapter 32, and you'll find that Jeremiah was told by God to buy some real estate property. That's what Jeremiah did, but I'm sure he had plenty of questions, not the least of which was "why?" Why was Judah going into captivity? Was God going to keep His covenants?

God's answer is found in the aforementioned v. 3. The word for "incompre-

hensible" is a word used to describe a fortified city, a city enclosed by high walls. The idea is that we don't demand answers from God - He's not obligated to explain Himself to us. But God does, through prayer, reveal His nature to us, and even can teach us how to wait on Him as He works in His own fashion. Jeremiah knew the city was destined for judgement. His wrath was coming (vv. 4-5). Parts of the city had already been

torn down to strengthen the walls against the Babylonian siege ramps. God told them, in effect, "Have at it. But it's not going to help." Jerusalem was to be destroyed because of its wickedness.

Jeremiah 33:6 - 8. God will purify and forgive His children.

In light of the coming wrath, these are hopeful words. God often works in contrasts. Here, for instance, we see two prophecies which seem to cancel each other

out - a prophecy of judgement but also a prophecy of blessing. Judgement is necessary, but it can also be temporary.

These verses speak of healing and cleansing. The wicked city and its people would ultimately be forgiven and be a picture to the rest of the world to the goodness and grace of God. The promise was that God would "let them experience of true peace" (v. 6). There were three blessings involved here: (1) The land would be restored - the fortunes of Judah and Israel would be restored and they would be rebuilt. (2) The people would be restored to the Lord - He would purify them from all their iniquity and forgive them of all their evil. (3) They would receive a special honor among the nations - the promise was that the city would bear on God's behalf a name of joy, praise, and glory. Other nations would tremble with awe because of all the good God displayed.

Bible Studies for Life

with Tony Martin

**Jeremiah 33:14 - 16. God will administer His justice and righteousness.**

The phrase "the days are coming" (v. 14, CSB) is used 16 times by Jeremiah in his book. In its first seven uses, it refers to the destruction of Jerusalem, but in its last nine uses it speaks of the future blessings of Jerusalem. Jeremiah has referred to God as "The Lord our Righteousness," and now is the promise that Jerusalem will have the same name. Why do you think Jerusalem is known as The Holy City?

While Jerusalem will be blessed, the true blessing comes from the prophecy of the Righteous Branch in verse 15. This is a Messianic prophecy foretelling of the advent of Jesus Christ. "... and he will administer justice and righteousness in the land" (v. 15b).

This, of course, is the greatest blessing of all to Jerusalem. There will be, once and for all, a King reigning in righteousness. We are heirs of that promise. The world is not fair and just, but Christ will ultimately make all things right. We are to let Him work His righteousness in our lives.

Martin is Associate Editor of The Baptist Record.

BOTO

cont. from p. 1

Matt, and Grace.

"The officers have confidence that Augie will provide stability in leadership for the Executive Committee during this interim period as the [Executive Com-

mittee] begins its search for a new president," Rummage said.

Boto said the Executive Committee staff "is committed to the principle that Southern Baptists accomplish more when we work together. In the lead-up to the SBC annual meeting in Dallas, our staff will spotlight the full array of Southern Baptist mis-

sions and ministries, promoting support for our collaborative work through the Cooperative Program."

The full EC will elect a presidential search committee during a special called plenary session in Nashville April 17.

In accordance with a provision of EC Bylaw 6, adopted in

2012, the six-member search committee will be elected by written ballot among nominees from the floor during the special meeting.

The board chair will serve as an ex-officio member with the right to vote, constituting a seven-member presidential search committee.

"We ask Southern Baptists to continue to pray for the Executive Committee staff in their day-to-day duties in the countdown days to the SBC annual meeting in Dallas and for the full Executive Committee as we meet in two weeks to elect a presidential search committee," Rummage said.

Just for the Record

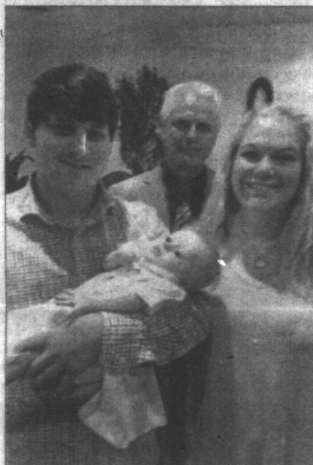


FIRST CHURCH, PASCAGOULA, Girls in Action (GAs) recently held a bake sale during which they raised \$2,014.22 for missions through the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for North American Missions. They are pictured with their leaders, Jennifer Sumrall and Cissy Ormon.

In other Church News:

► **Pearl River Association, McNeil,** is hosting a Pearl River Alive evangelistic crusade on April 22-25 beginning at 6:30 p.m. nightly in the Marvin R. White Coliseum on the Pearl River Community College campus in Poplarville. Mass choir of association's churches will perform each night. Rusty Kuhn, speaker. Brad Replogle, worship leader.

► **Escatawpa Church, Moss Point,** and College Hill Christian Academy varsity basketball team will host a basketball camp for grades one through twelve on April 14 from 8 a.m. to noon. Free registration opens at 8 a.m. Hot dog lunch provided.



LILLY ORCHARD CHURCH, ESCATAWPA, held baby dedication on March 11. Pictured are (left photo) Legend Williams Davis and his parents, Christal Williams and Caleb Davis, along with Ricky Colvin, pastor; and (right photo) Lucas Clay Sims and his parents, Clay and Alicia Sims, along with Ricky Colvin, pastor.



GILLSBURG CHURCH, OSYKA, recently completed the nine-week Financial Peace University course. Pictured are attendees.



CENTER HILL CHURCH, MONROE ASSOCIATION, Senior Ladies' Sunday School Class recently viewed the faith-based movie, *I Can Only Imagine*: (from left) Donna Roberts, Doris Holman, Minnie Nell Rea, Shirley Reese, Marie McLemore, Ellen Uithoven, and Vicki Dobbs.

Submission Guidelines

The Baptist Record is pleased to publish news and photographs of special events that take place in cooperating churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention. News items and/or photographs depicting benefits and activities for secular or outside organizations will not be published.

Preferred method: news may be submitted electronically to the e-mail address below, and must be included in the message segment of an e-mail form. Secondary method: news may be typewritten or neatly printed on 8 1/2 by 11-inch paper and mailed. All articles must be received in writing; no articles will be accepted over the telephone. Due to ever-present virus threats, no text attachments will be accepted. Photograph attachments in JPEG format are permissible.

Please make articles concise. Include the who, what, when, where details of the story, along with a contact person's address and telephone number.

Photographs must be submitted electronically

via e-mail, as attachments in JPEG format. **Hard copy photographs mailed through the postal service will not be accepted.** Photographs must be clear, sharp, and well-lighted. Photographs must depict people. No landscape, building, or object-only photographs will be printed. Photographs containing inappropriate gestures and objectionable clothing will not be published. Cell phone photographs and other low resolution items that do not reproduce well on newsprint are generally not publishable.

There is no guarantee that news items and/or photographs will be published, and unsolicited material will not be acknowledged or returned. All news items are subject to editing, and all photographs are subject to cropping. News items and/or photographs can be published one time only. Deadline for submitting news is one week prior to requested publication date. Articles that are not date-sensitive will be published on a space-available basis. These guidelines are not meant to be exhaustive.

Submit news to The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. FAX: (601) 292-3330. E-mail: baptistrecord@mbcb.org

Need a light?

Jesus said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness but will have the light of life." (John 8:12)

Simply share the following prayer with God in your own words:

1. Lord, I admit that I need you. (I have sinned.)
2. I want forgiveness for my sins and freedom from eternal death. (I repent.)
3. I believe Jesus died and rose from the grave to forgive my sins and to restore my relationship with you. (I believe in Jesus.)
4. By faith, I invite Jesus Christ into my life. From this time on, I want to live in a loving relationship with Him. (I receive Christ as my Savior and Lord.)

"But as many as received him, to them he gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in his name." (John 1:12)
If you make a decision for Christ today, contact a local Southern Baptist church for spiritual guidance.